

## 69-01-Citizen Access to Services and Information

Fund/Agency: 001/69		Department of Systems Management for Human Services
Personnel Services	\$2,721,130	<p><b>CAPS Percentage of Agency Total</b></p> <p>41.3% 58.7%</p> <p>■ Citizen Access to Services and Information ■ All Other Agency CAPS</p>
Operating Expenses	\$323,461	
Recovered Costs	\$0	
Capital Equipment	\$0	
<b>Total CAPS Cost:</b>	<b>\$3,044,591</b>	
Federal Revenue	\$0	
State Revenue	\$0	
User Fee Revenue	\$0	
Other Revenue	\$0	
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	
<b>Net CAPS Cost:</b>	<b>\$3,044,591</b>	
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this CAPS	55/54.75	

### u CAPS Summary

DSMHS seeks to ensure access to services and information that build upon the strengths of individuals and communities. We do this by connecting clients with needed services through the Coordinated Services Planning function, by raising public awareness of available resources through the Human Services Resource and Service Information Management function, and by identifying community needs and assets and enabling data-driven decision-making through the Demographic, Land Use, and Community Information Management function.

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Each of the agency's functions contributes uniquely to the goal of providing access to services and information in a way that enhances the strengths and abilities of our customers, who include individuals, public and non-profit human service providers, businesses, and many County agencies. The services and information provided by the agency empowers the majority of our clients and customers to interact directly with their community, using our services as a support, but not relying on the County to provide long-term or highly-intensive services, information, or analysis. This approach not only empowers citizens to participate fully in meeting their own needs, it also increases the capacity of the system to serve citizens who need more intensive support or assistance. The three agency functions that contribute most directly to providing citizen access to services and information are described below.

The Coordinated Services Planning (CSP) function works at the client level to help individuals and families handle emergency situations by simplifying client access to appropriate human services. Customers range from people seeking services for themselves, to people seeking services for relatives and friends, to human services providers seeking services for their clients. CSP staff is a link to all public and private human services available to Fairfax residents. Coordinators assess individual and family situations, over the telephone or in person, and develop an integrated service plan to connect residents with human services to meet their immediate needs. Coordinators also explore prevention and early intervention strategies with community-based organizations and other Fairfax County service providers to help clients achieve economic independence and social stability.

The Human Services Resource and Service Information Management staff develops and maintains the information contained in the Resource Services System (RSS), a comprehensive computerized database of public, non-profit, and some for-profit human services available to Fairfax County residents. The internet-based Human Services Resource Guide ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/RM](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/RM)) makes the service and resource information contained in the RSS database available to County residents and service providers 24 hours per day/seven days per week. The Resource Guide contains information on almost 600 organizations and 4,800 service entries.

The Demographic, Land Use, and Community Information Management function facilitates data-driven planning, decision making, and policy development by Fairfax County agencies, boards, authorities, and commissions, as well as the business and development community. As the organizational home to the County's chief demographer and a small staff of analysts, the unit is the focal point for all major data collection activities for the County, such as the US Census, the annual Rental Housing Survey, the biennial Household Survey, the annual Demographic Reports, the 1995 Fairfax-Falls Church Community Needs Assessment, and the 2000 Community Assessment. The unit provides data and analysis which serves as the foundation for Fairfax County's official population, public facility, demographic, transportation, and land use planning forecasts. They also provide technical support to County agencies and committees conducting demographic or survey research projects and answer inquiries from County staff, citizens, and businesses, responding to more than 1,000 citizen and business information inquiries each year.

The demographic analysis function has only been a part of DSMHS since FY 1999. Prior to FY 1999, the unit was in the Department of Information Technology's former Office of Research and Statistics and later in the Department of Management and Budget. The transfer of the unit to DSMHS allowed the County to consolidate much of its research and analysis resources, aligning human service planning and community development efforts and avoiding operating redundancies.

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### Accomplishments and Initiatives

In the past few years, the agency has completed a number of successful initiatives to improve citizen access to services and information:

- § In FY 2001, social workers from Coordinated Services Planning formed a unique partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools social workers in more broadly assessing and addressing the needs of immigrant and refugee families as they registered for school at the FCPS central registration facility. FCPS social workers, paired with multi-lingual Coordinated Service Planners (CSP's), provided more than 500 non-English-speaking families with information about available school and community services, and provided referrals for services such as health insurance, childcare, ESL, free lunch, housing, and employment. This partnership between County Human Services and FCPS Student Services will continue in FY 2002.
- § Last year, the agency established the Human Services Resources Guide on the web that provides access to comprehensive human services resource and service information on a 24-hour/7-day-per-week basis. The Resource Guide allows citizens and service providers to easily search thousands of service options that include publicly-provided services, private non-profit services, and some for-profit services. While a number of other jurisdictions have implemented automated resource guides and have placed them on the web, Fairfax's web-based Human Services Resources Guide and the underlying Resource Service System (RSS) stands as unique. In addition to having a generally broader focus than similar databases, the Resource Guide provides an unsurpassed level of information depth and detail about services and organizations, allowing citizens and human service professionals alike to make more informed and accurate judgments about the appropriateness of specific services to their individual needs.
- § Over the past several years, the agency has developed and produced a variety of cross-system and Countywide information sources, including the 2000 Fairfax-Falls Church Community Assessment, which reports information from a random survey of households on a range of human service needs and characteristics; the Fairfax County Biennial Household Survey, which collects information on demographic characteristics (age, race, language spoken, etc.) and economic characteristics (employment status, income, etc.) of the members of the 10,600 households sampled; the Annual Rental Housing Complex Census, which collects cost, vacancy, and other information on rental complexes with five or more units (excluding publicly owned and certain senior citizen complexes); and the County's Annual Demographic Reports, which include estimates and projections for population, housing units, real estate market values, and land use and development.
- § Coordinated Services Planning and the demographic analysis and regional staff worked as part of a partnership to conduct a survey of Immigrant and Refugee families with children in the Fairfax County Public Schools. The survey was designed under the oversight of the demographic research staff and was conducted in eight languages by regional and Coordinated Services Planning staff. The study is the first of its kind in a local jurisdiction and was reported in the Washington Post and the New York Times. It provides unique insight and information on one of the fastest growing population segments in the County and will serve as a primary source of data to better understand both the strengths and needs of some of the County's newest residents.

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- § The agency also served as the County's liaison with the United States Bureau of the Census to analyze and disseminate census information to the County agencies, and to manage local partnership programs to improve decennial census results such as the Local Update of Census Addresses program and the Statistical Areas program. As part of this role, the agency staffed the 2000 Census Complete Count initiative in Fairfax County. The census response rate for Fairfax increased as compared with the 1990 Census despite significant growth, increased population diversity, and increased urbanization – all of which present challenges to obtaining a complete census count. Fairfax County won national recognition from the Director of the US Bureau of the Census for its 2000 Complete Count effort and response rates.
- § In the upcoming year, the agency will focus on the analysis and dissemination of newly available 2000 Census data, information from the 2000 Fairfax-Falls Church Community Assessment, the Immigrant and Refugee Survey, and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey to support planning and community capacity building.

### u Trends and Issues

While the functions that contribute to the Citizen Access to Services and Information CAP represent different disciplines, they share several common aspects and face similar challenges. All are characterized by their breadth of scope and services, and they have few of the traditional disciplinary or service population boundaries found in most other County programs. While this adds significant value to residents of the County, it makes it difficult for the programs to manage the demand for their services.

In addition, each function is on the front line of service provision to all citizens of the County and must respond to any inquiry or request received. Each function strives to respond to those requests in a way that enables citizens to be as self-sufficient as possible in meeting their own service or information needs, while still providing whatever level of individualized service is necessary.

The functions also share an emphasis on partnerships to carry out their work. As such, they must respond not only to their own changing environment but also to the trends and issues presented by their partners. For example, the Demographic and Economic Research staff relies on other County agencies to provide land use and development data for the population and housing forecasts. As agencies adopt new computer systems and business processes, the Demographic staff must revise its own systems to accommodate the changes, often with little advance notice.

Finally, a critical and unique component of this CAP is the degree to which each function relies on technology to carry out its work. In most human services agencies, technology is one tool to support the work; in DSMHS, technology is the means of carrying out the work. Many of the agency's critical systems are in need of upgrades and/or reengineering to maintain their utility and value, and this will be a high-priority for the agency in the coming year.

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### **u Method of Service Provision**

The services in this CAPS submission are provided directly by County staff.

The Coordinated Services Planning function is delivered in a particularly unique way combining the professional training, skills, and the “high touch” perspective of the social work profession with call center management and computerized case management technology to optimize access, responsiveness, flexibility, and efficiency. Coordinated Services Planning operates Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. CSP has locations in Reston, Fairfax, Mt. Vernon, and Falls Church, where they are co-located with other human service agencies. CSP is accessible from anywhere in the County through the Human Services access number (703-222-0880). CSP is also available in Spanish (703-631-3366) and is accessible for persons with hearing impairments (TTY 703-803-7914). Callers requiring assistance in French, German, Greek, Korean, Somali, Urdu/Hindi, or Vietnamese may call the English line to be connected with a multi-lingual coordinator.

The internet-based Human Service Resource Guide ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/RJM](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/RJM)) and the Demographics and Economic Research web pages ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aboutfairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aboutfairfax)) are available to County residents, service providers, and anyone with an Internet connection 24 hours per day/seven days per week.

The Demographics staff has an information help-line (703-324-4519) to take citizens’ requests for information 24 hours per day/seven days per week. The staff strives to respond to all inquiries within one business day.

Resource Information Management staff members are available to respond to requests for information Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### **u Performance/Workload Related Data**

Since FY 1998, Coordinated Services Planning has provided approximately 125,000 client service interactions, emphasizing meeting critical emergency and basic needs such as food, shelter, utility, medical, and clothing assistance. Client service interactions include more than 100,000 inbound and outbound telephone and walk-in interactions with clients; Community Health Care Network clients assessed for eligibility or recertification; holiday assistance requests screened and linked to community groups; and affordable housing applicants assisted for Fairfax County, the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church, and the Town of Herndon. This measure reflects the volume and variety of the work performed by Coordinated Services Planning staff. Because the system has been operating at or near peak capacity for several years, the volume of interactions has not changed significantly.

CSP’s Service Quality and Outcome measures reflect the department’s success at meeting those needs in an effective way. While long-term satisfaction is difficult to gauge due to the nature of the work, client satisfaction measured through point-of-contact surveys is very high – 86 percent of walk-in clients gave the highest possible satisfaction rating, while 98 percent responded as being “satisfied” or “very satisfied.” CSP is close to meeting the outcome goal of successfully linking 90 percent of CSP clients with basic needs to County, community, or personal resources. FY 2000 results of 88 percent reflect both the success and creativity of the coordinators in linking clients with appropriate resources, as well as the difficulty in meeting needs where few resources exist in the community, such as for emergency housing.

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The performance measures that are most meaningful for the Demographics and Economic Research group relate to the large Countywide surveys conducted by staff. The agency closely manages sample size and sampling techniques to ensure that results are representative of the County as a whole. The agency also uses a variety of techniques to maximize the response rate, such as multi-language help-lines and follow-up to non-responders. The agency achieved a 63 percent response rate from the 11,200 households that received the community assessment survey conducted in FY 2001. The agency regularly receives better than 98 percent response rates for the annual Rental Housing Complex Census. The department will also continue to respond within one business day to at least 90 percent of requests for demographic information via the help-line, and to update and expand the demographic information available on the County's web site. The implementation of the Demographic Information web site has reduced the overall telephone calls for information assistance due to the increased availability of information.

In addition to maintaining almost 600 organizations and 4,800 service entries, each year the staff researches new organizations and services for inclusion in the database. In FY 1999, 170 organizations were researched. In FY 2000, 114 organizations were researched for inclusion in the database. The Resource Information staff also responds to email inquiries about services sent via [wwwrim@co.fairfax.va.us](mailto:wwwrim@co.fairfax.va.us) (accessible from the County's web site) and provides assistance to County and community human services professionals seeking information about service resources.

Title	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Estimate	FY 2002 Estimate
CSP Client Service Interactions	123,693	125,823	126,021	126,000	126,000
CSP New Cases Established	5,566	4,714	4,351	4,400	4,400
CSP Client Service Interactions Per Worker	3,343	3,813	3,406	3,405	3,405
Percent of Calls to CSP Answered by a Coordinator Within 90 Seconds	67%	66%	58%	70%	70%
Percent of CSP Clients Having Basic Needs Successfully Linked To County, Community or Personal Resources	89%	87%	88%	90%	90%
Demographics-Responses to Rental Housing Survey	208	NA	225	219	219

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Title	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Estimate	FY 2002 Estimate
Demographics- Reponses to Biennial Household Survey	7,218	NA	NA	7,280	NA
Total Demographics Information Requests	1,126	650	481	500	500
Percent of Demographic Information Requests Answered Within One Work Day	99.9%	99.0%	95.0%	90.0%	90.0%